

RAMP Questions & Answers Group II

January 19, 2012

As there is significant interest in RAMP, Rental Action Management Program, staff will provide responses to questions concerning the draft program design/ordinance in the following format and post this information online at www.ci.fayetteville.nc.us/rppp. Below are questions received following the December 12, 2011 public hearing and the January 9, 2012 RAMP presentation to City Council. The numbering follows the eleven (11) previous questions contained in the December 15, 2011 RAMP Q&A Group I document.

12. Recently there have been three incidents of murders in apartment complexes. In two of those situations the apartment complexes appear to be well maintained and quiet. On the other hand - the third location has a well known history of crime incidents. Would all three of these situations have been treated the same under RAMP even if the crime could not have been anticipated and completely out of character for the development?

Yes. If all of the properties are similarly sized (number of units by categorized in RAMP ordinance), each would receive the same number of RAMP points for murder. Crime operates on in a triangle, and requires all three sides to occur. RAMP seeks to have the property owner/manager lessen the opportunity for crime by doing all things practicable.



Of course there are always those crimes of 'passion' or instances where despite everyone's best efforts crimes occur. RAMP anticipates that by only focusing on the top 10% of total crime incidents at similarly sized rental properties. While truly the most horrific crime, one murder in an of itself might not lead to a property being entered into RAMP. Each case will be looked at on a case by case basis. I did not think "crimes of passion" would be counted against a property owner. Those types of crimes are truly non-preventable. The "shot house" homicides is where the property should be held accountable. The modifications planned to RAMP should also provide an additional cushion against concerns of subjectivity in deciding which murders are included or excluded from calculations.

13. How much will RAMP cost as presented?

One time start up costs are \$ 242,703, with a full year operational costs for FY13 at \$350,665.

14. Take one rental house in Massey Hill and one rental house in Fairfield Farms or somewhere else, assuming both get rented to someone charged for prostitution. Walk us through under what conditions each might find itself in RAMP. Also assuming one rental house was in a high-crime neighborhood or one had previous criminal activity by tenants, how would that impact the properties chances of entering RAMP as it relates to the top 10% mentioned in the draft ordinance.

As drafted, the location of the rental houses is not impacted in any way in determining entry into RAMP. The crime component of RAMP only applies to the listed crimes (Appendix A) which occur at the rental property. Crime in the surrounding neighborhood doesn't affect entry. Admittedly, properties in high crime areas are more likely to be the site of crime, but being located in a high crime area in and of itself doesn't determine entry into RAMP.

As it relates to prostitution by location. Prostitution carries the same number of RAMP points regardless of location. Therefore, both properties (single family homes or similarly sized apartment complexes – size to size) would receive the same number of RAMP points for which they would be compared to all the other similarly sized properties at a 6-month review. Those similarly sized properties in the top 10% of crime, as identified in that 6-month review would be eligible for entry into RAMP.

15. In Subdivision 'X' there is mix of single family homes and condos - many of which are no longer owner occupied and have now become rentals. The subdivision is clean, quiet, and well maintained. However, the single family homes and condos have increasingly been the victims of crime. Almost daily, doors are kicked in and B&Es occur. People go to work and they are robbed. How would owners/occupants be penalized when they've done everything possible to prevent crime?

Regrettably, residential rental properties that are the site of Crime incidents, for which the owner/tenants have little seeming control, can be required to register as a RAMP property. As mentioned above, the goal is to reduce the opportunities for crime. Nevertheless, there may be instances where Crime incidents still occur. RAMP provides the owners a chance to partner (more directly) with the Police to help lessen opportunities for RAMP Crime incidents. Some may occur through education of tenants, screening of tenants, installation of additional security measures, etc.

16. Will RAMP be self-supporting or are there any cost avoidance opportunities if adopted?

No, RAMP will not be self-supporting. Estimating the possible number of eligible properties, and that costs to service those properties offset by the proposed \$1000 registration fee, it is an almost certainty that RAMP will require support from the General Fund. The possible revenue calculations are estimates. As such, if adopted it is safer to assume that the program will require estimated General Fund support of \$350,665.

Given that RAMP won't be self supporting and that entry into RAMP still requires Code/Police to respond, there aren't any identified opportunities to avoid other costs at this time. As the program matures, it is anticipated & expected that the number of Code violations/Crime incidents would also decrease, but to what level we can't calculate, e.g., in 5 years we will be able to eliminate on inspector position. Staff will be expected to work themselves out of a job through reduction in repeat Code violations/Crime incidents, but we can't forecast that conclusion at this time.

17. What is the implementation schedule for RAMP if adopted?

Development Services

Resources Needed

- 1 code enforcement officer, .5 office assistant

Months 1-9

- (1) Data collection and observation
- (2) March 2012 begin hiring process for code enforcement officer
- (3) Run 1st batch of reports to determine if any properties have 3+ code enforcement violations in April 2012 – 1st quarter.
- (4) Run 2nd batch of reports to determine if any properties have 3+ code enforcement violations in July 2012 – 2nd quarter.

Months 9-12+

- (1) Run 3rd batch of reports to determine if any properties have 3+ code enforcement violations in October 2012 – 3rd quarter.
- (2) September 2012 begin hiring process for .5 office assistant
- (3) Run 4th batch of reports to determine if any properties have 3+ code enforcement violations in January 2013 – 4th quarter.

Police

Resources Needed

- 1 Sergeant to oversee the program, 1 sworn officer, 2 crime analysts

Months 1-6:

- (1) Hire/appoint staff
- (2) Identification of residential rental properties, by size and categories, using a variety of methods
- (3) Identification of tracking software to be used for monitoring properties in RAMP
- (4) Development of the Remedial Action Manual

Months 7-12:

- (1) Official tally of data gathered thus far to identify the top 10% residential rental properties eligible for entry into the program – focusing on the top 8% primarily
- (2) Set up the mandatory meetings with those in the top 8% to enroll them in RAMP
- (3) Send out courtesy warning letters to those property owners that have been identified as being in the top 8%-10% that won't be enrolled in RAMP

18. As presented, what elements of RAMP can be scaled, up/down/out of the draft program?

There are several elements of RAMP that can be modified and still have an appreciably positive impact on residential properties. To illustrate, see the checklist below.

RAMP Element	Yes/No
(1) Should RAMP include Code violations?	
(2) Should RAMP include Crime incidents?	
(3) Should the Code violations start at 3 violations in a 12-month period, or should it take more violations for entry into RAMP?	
(4) Once in RAMP for Code violations, should it take 1 additional violation to have the property registration (ability to rent the unit) revoked, or should it take more violations?	
(5) Are the Code violations listed in Appendix B the violations that should lead to entry into RAMP?	
(6) Should the Crime incidents be in the top 10% or some lesser number like Charlotte's 4% for entry into RAMP, when compared to similarly sized rental communities?	
(7) Are the Crime incidents listed in Appendix A the incidents that should lead to entry into RAMP?	
(8) Should the registration fee be \$1000 or some different amount?	

Once answered, staff can modify RAMP consistent with Council's interests.